



**March is
Problem Gambling Awareness Month**

Get involved in #AwarenessPlusAction



NCPG

National Council on Problem Gambling

Gambling in the Military: A Call to Arms

March 3, 2020

National Council on Problem Gambling

- Membership-based non-profit (501c3) founded in **1972**
- **Neutral** on legalized gambling
- **Advocate** for people with gambling problems
- Engage directly with government, gambling industry,
healthcare providers/agencies & recovering gamblers

MISSION & VALUES

Purpose

Serve as the national advocate for programs and services to assist people and families affected by problem gambling

Vision

Lead state and national stakeholders in the development of comprehensive policies and programs

Mission

Improve health and wellness by reducing the personal, social, and economic costs

NATIONAL PROGRAMS

National Problem Gambling Helpline Network

28 call centers which provide resources and referrals for all 50 states, Canada and the US Virgin Islands. **Help is available 24/7 and is 100% confidential.**

Annual National **Conference** on Problem Gambling (July)

National Problem Gambling Awareness Month (March)

Holiday Lottery Responsible Gambling Campaign (December)

Administration of the International Certified Gambling Counselor (ICGC) credential

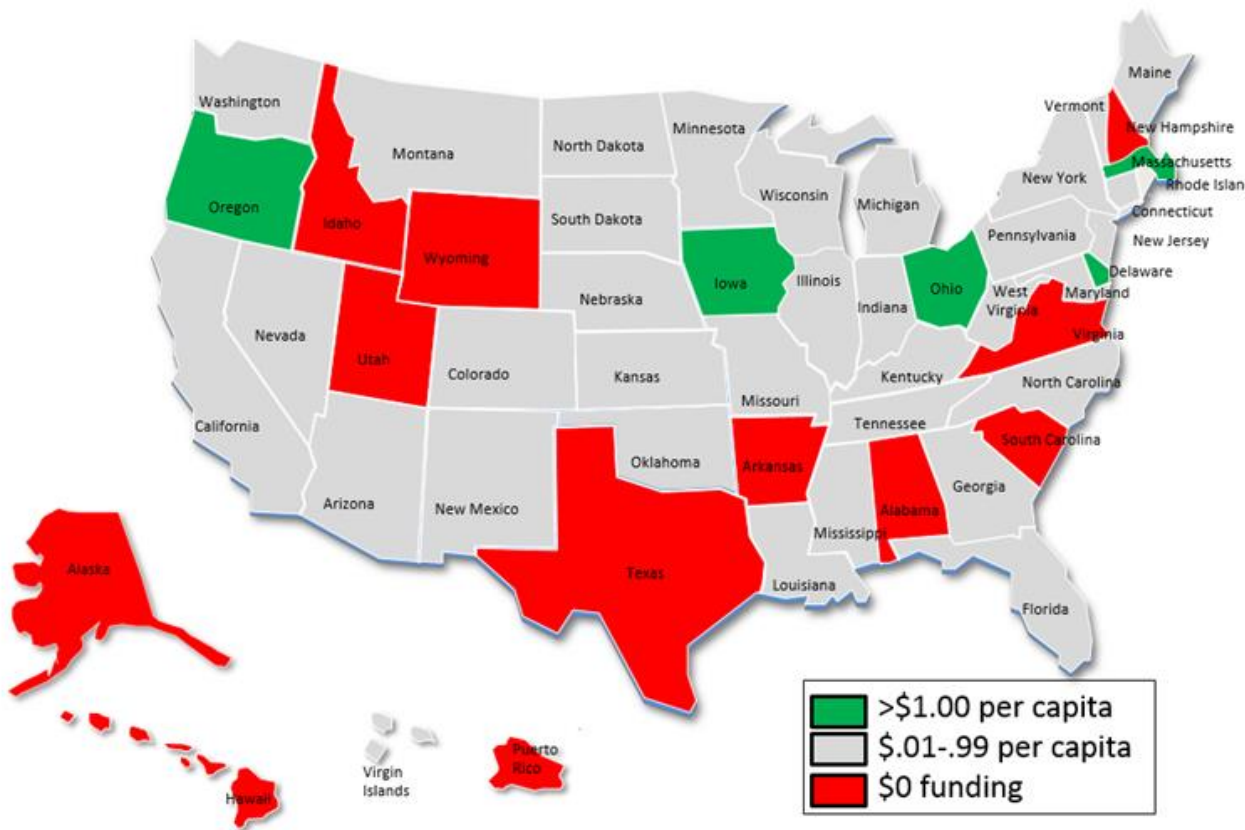
National research – **NGAGE Survey**

MY STORY



Problem and Responsible Gambling in America

Problem Gambling Funding Per Capita



A Tattered Safety Net:

- Total average \$ per PG per capita is 12 cents
- Avg 37 cents in states with funding
- Only **5** states +\$1 per capita
- **9** states with \$0
- **No** Federal funding
- Substance abuse is **334x** more funded than publicly funded Problem Gambling services.

Regulation depends on the States

Awareness: No Federal Support

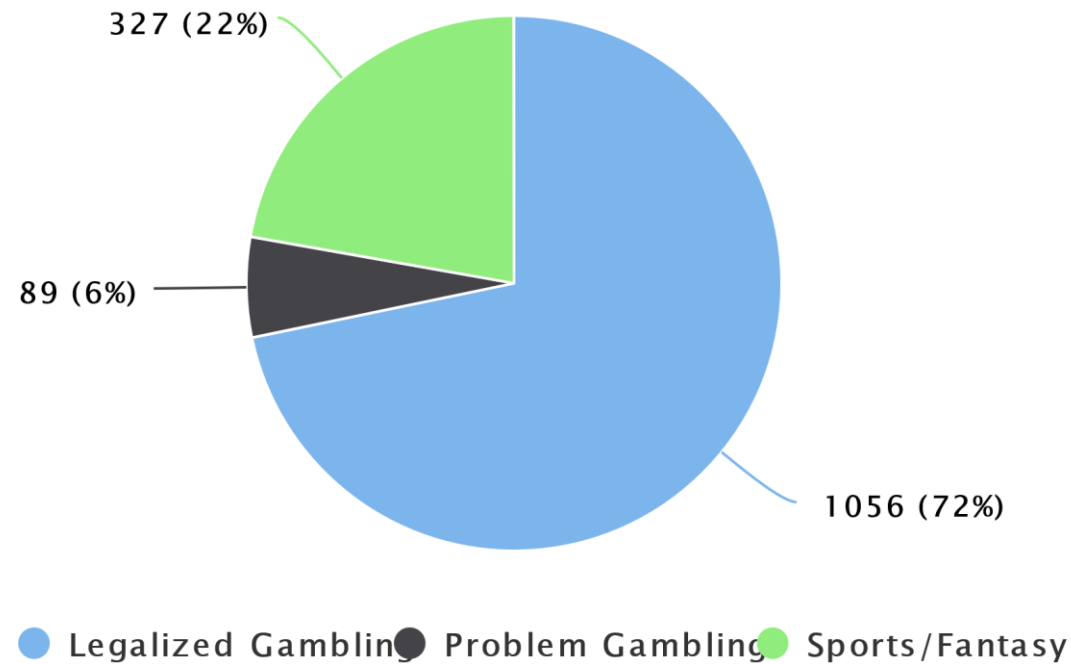
- IRS collected \$7.5 billion in Federal withholding tax on gambling winnings above \$1,200 in FY 2016
- .025% Federal excise tax on sports handle...
- Unlike Federal excise taxes on alcohol and tobacco sales, \$0 of gambling tax dedicated to problem gambling services
- No dedicated Federal \$ or programs in HHS or any other agency

Gambling and the Federal Gov't

- The National Gambling Impact Study Commission Act of 1996
- Established the National Gambling Impact Study Commission in 1997 to conduct a comprehensive legal and factual study of the social and economic impacts of gambling in the U.S.
- Specifically the commission was to look at the following:
 - Existing policies and practices concerning the legalization of prohibition of gambling
 - The relationship between gambling and crime
 - **The nature and impact of pathological and problem gambling**
 - The impacts of gambling on individuals, communities, and the economy, including depressed economic areas
 - The extent to which gambling revenue had benefited various governments and whether alternative revenue sources existed
 - The effects of technology, including the Internet on gambling

Legislative Tracker

February 27, 2020 (Updated)



Highcharts.com

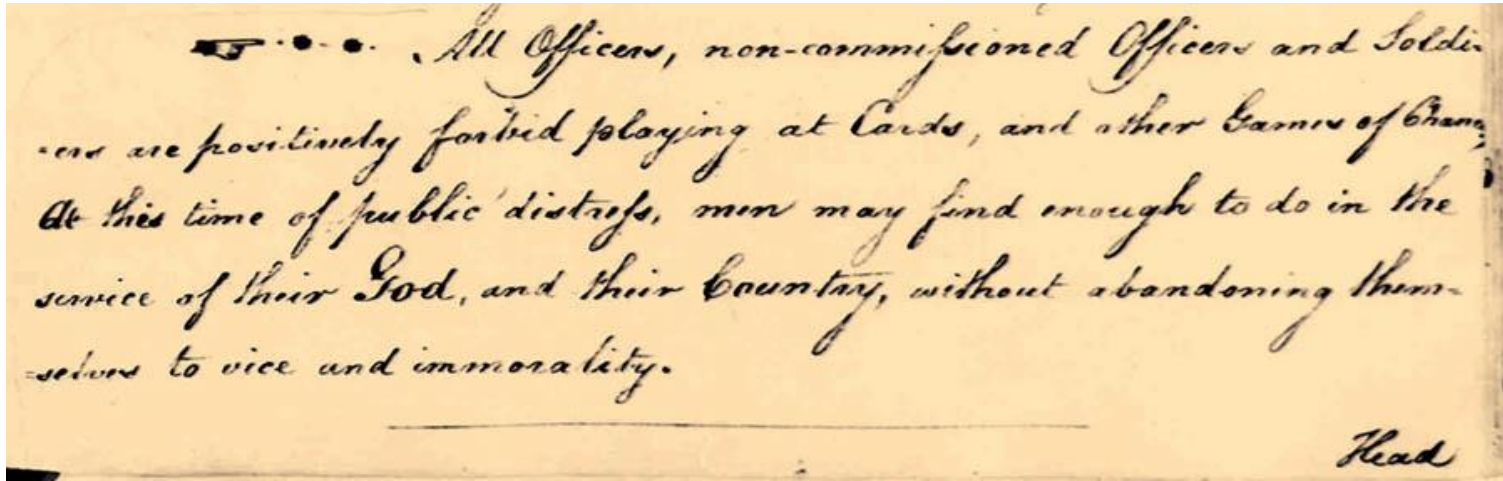
Total 1472

Gambling in Military Through the Ages

1190: During the Third Crusade, King Richard & King Phillip II ban gambling for those below rank of Knight, 20 shilling a day above...but no limit for Kings!

1541: King Henry VIII of England prohibits several categories of gaming, including bowling, tennis, dicing, and carding...to encourage men to take up archery for defense

George Washington



Avid backgammon & card player.

"All officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers are positively forbid [sic] playing at cards, and other forms of gaming at this time of public distress, men may find enough to do in the service of their God and our Country, without abandoning themselves to vice and immorality." General Orders, February 26, 1776

WWSHRBAMP

- The Worldwide Survey of Health Risk Behaviors Among Military Personnel is a large-scale epidemiologic study that screened personnel for gambling-related problems in 1992, 1998 and 2002.
- Criteria and definitions changed considerably between surveys.
- Likely underreporting.

Historical Background

Gambling Addiction in the Military

Previous DoD large-scale worldwide health studies of military personnel showed lifetime rates of gambling problems at least **2x higher** than civilian population:

	1992	1998	2002	2006	2008	2010-2011
	Active Duty	Active Duty	Active Duty	Reserve/Guard	AF Recruits	Reserve/Guard
At Risk/ Moderate Problem (1-4)	7.1%	8.1%	8.6%	10.5%	6.2%	N/A
Serious Problem (5+)	2%	2.2%	1.2%	2.5%	1.9%	1.3%
Combined	9.1%	10.2%	9.8%	12.5%	8.1%	N/A

Gambling Addiction in the Military

- **NCPG conservatively estimates 2% of military personnel meet criteria for serious gambling problems and 2% for moderate problems/at-risk gambling**
- That's an estimated **56,000** active duty personnel with gambling problems
- Prevalence of gambling disorder in the military is a serious health and financial issue, and also poses a national security concern, harming individual readiness and human performance and increasing affected servicemembers' susceptibility to blackmail and other malign influence
- Given the data we have – we estimate only **100 of the 56,000** struggling would even attempt to seek treatment each year

Why Soldiers Gamble (More?)

During deployment:

- Entertainment
- Relieve stress
- Relieve boredom/social isolation
- Substitute/metaphor for action
- Belief in luck, superstition

When the soldiers return home:

- It is fun and exciting
- It fills a void

Gambling Effects on Service Member & Family

- Letters of indebtedness
- Bounced checks
- Misuse of government credit cards
- Security risk
- Forgery
- Embezzlement
- Loss of rank
- Divorce
- Lost work time/ productivity
- Forced retirements
- Bad conduct discharges
- Suicidal risks

Barriers to Services

- Doesn't fit comfortably with existing structure—is it addiction, mental health, financial, discipline or moral (chaplain) issue?
- Concerns about confidentiality.
- Military uses stricter definition of insanity.
- Lack of resources, particularly gambling.
- Problem gambling often accompanied by crimes—risk of courts martial/DD
- Stigma, shame & misunderstanding.

Case Study: Foster, A

- Chaplains Assistant, 8th Army, Korea. Problem with slots on base, embezzlement
- “He went to Army Community Services; they said they couldn’t help and sent him to Mental Health Services. There, they said, ‘No, we can’t help you-go to your chaplain.’ So he goes to his chaplain, who says he’s not qualified to help with addiction and refers him to...Army Community Services.”

FY '16 NDAA

- Sen. Warren (D-MA) includes report language calling for study of gambling and problem gambling in military, including:
 - # of slots, participation & revenue
 - Prevalence of PG among military personnel
 - Assessment of capacity of treatment services
- Report to Congress in **one year**
- Builds foundation for future efforts

SUCCESS!

Report language **included in FY 2016 NDAA**

GAO report released Jan 2017.

2017 GAO Report

Public Law 114-92 included a provision for GAO to review gambling among members of the armed forces

- 3 areas were examined in the GAO Report:
 - Known prevalence of gambling disorder among servicemembers (DOD & USCG)
 - Assessment of DOD and USCG approach to screening, diagnosing, and treating servicemembers
 - Evaluated the extent to which DOD and USCG guidance address gambling disorder in a manner similar to substance-use disorders

2017 GAO Report Findings

- **8 Recommendations were made:**
 - Secretary of Defense direct the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness:
 - Incorporate medical screening questions specific to gambling disorder
 - Update DOD instruction 1010.04, *Problematic Substance Use by DOD Personnel*, to explicitly include gambling disorder, as defined by the DSM V
 - Update the Army, Naval, Air Force, Marine and USCG regulations and instruction manuals

2017 GAO Report Response

- DOD concurred with **five** recommendations to update DOD and military service policies to explicitly include gambling disorder
- However, DOD did **NOT** concur with the recommendations to incorporate screening questions

What Else We Learned

The DOD **PROMOTES** gambling

- While slot machines were removed from all domestic military installations after 1951
- **3,141** slot machines are on Army, Navy, and Marine Corp installations around the world
 - Locations include: Japan, Germany, Republic of Korea, Italy, UK, Spain, Diego Garcia, Turkey, Greece, Greenland, Singapore, Azores

Yes, that's the correct number

Fiscal years 2011 through 2015, DOD-run slot machines generated...

**\$538.9 MILLION in
revenue**

History of DOD Slots

- Slot machines have been on some military bases since the **1930s**.
- The machines were banned from domestic military bases in 1951 but enjoyed a resurgence in the **1960s**.
- They were removed from Army and Air Force bases in **1972**, after a cash skimming scandal.
- Fifteen hundred machines remained on Navy and Marine Corps bases overseas, and in 1980 the Army and Air Force began restoring machines at overseas bases.

DOD Public Comments

Slot machines are "a very profitable operation," said Peter Isaacs, chief operating officer of the Army's Community and Family Support Center, which runs the largest slot machine program. "But we do not operate them strictly to extract profit. Our soldiers have told us they want access to the same games and gambling opportunities available to the civilians they are defending."

New York Times, Oct 19, 2005

DOD Public Comments

Undersecretary of Defense Leslye Arsht said that machines on bases and posts provide "a controlled alternative to unmonitored host-nation gambling venues and offer a higher payment percentage, making it more entertainment oriented than at typical casinos. DoD policy authorizes the military services to operate gaming and/or other amusement machines in overseas locations only, unless prohibited by host-country laws or agreements."

CNN May 23, 2007

Not Just Slots

- Army bingo, 2005: **\$45 million**
 - 11 of the largest games average more than \$100,000/month.
- Casinos in close proximity to bases:
 - Nellis AFB-Las Vegas, Camp Pendleton-Pechanga, Kessler AFB-Biloxi
- Poker & social gambling in barracks
- Military lottery?

Mixed Messages



FY '19 - NDAA

FY 19 NDAA – President Trump signed into law— for the DOD and USCG to begin systematically screening for gambling addiction

Section 733

The document in the House Armed Services Committee Report institutes the Department of Defense to include medical screening research regarding gambling disorder, starting in the next annual health assessment.

Once the Health Related Behaviors surveys of active duty and reserve component service members is done, the Secretary of Defense is requested to file a report back to Congress on the findings.



Three sections:

1. Requires the Secretary of Defense to implement policies for the prevention of gambling disorder. These policies should be developed in coordination with the Secretary of VA, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services
2. Provide a list of resources & informational material on where such members can seek help for a gambling disorder
3. **2017 GAO Report** – 180 day compliance, shall update all regulations, instructions and other guidance of Dept. of defense and the military dept with respect to behavioral health and explicitly include gambling disorder

The GAP (Gambling Addiction Prevention) Act

Introduced on: July 9, 2019

GAP Act

GAMBLING ADDICTION PREVENTION (GAP) ACT

"It's our duty as Americans to honor the sacrifices servicemembers and veterans make for our country. Senator Daines and I are reintroducing our bipartisan legislation to make sure veterans struggling with gambling addiction can get the treatment they need."

SENATOR ELIZABETH WARREN



GAMBLING ADDICTION PREVENTION (GAP) ACT

"Far too many service men and women suffer from gambling addictions. The GAP Act protects our troops by requiring the Defense Department to confront this growing problem head on."

SENATOR
STEVE DAINES



GAP Act

GAMBLING ADDICTION PREVENTION (GAP) ACT

“Our country must do more to help treat, prevent, and reduce gambling addiction among our servicemembers and veterans. When it comes to addiction, our military is often the most vulnerable, and gambling is no exception. That’s exactly why I introduced the GAP Act to ensure that our men and women in uniform have the resources they deserve to treat and prevent addiction on military bases.”

REPRESENTATIVE
SUSIE LEE



A healthy military
means a
healthy country.

NCPG fights to keep
the troops safe from
problem gambling.



FY '20 NDAA

180 day compliance, shall update all regulations, instructions and other guidance of Dept. of defense and the military dept with respect to behavioral health and explicitly include gambling disorder

Passed the House

Passed the Senate

FAILED in the final conference committee

Problem Gambling & Veterans

2011 study of 2,000 veterans found that **10.7%** meet the lifetime criteria for problem gambling

2016 study of Experiences of Returning Veterans (SERV) study of 738 veterans found **4.2%** screened for at-risk or problem gambling **immediately post deployment**

2017 GAO report – Dept. Veterans Affairs also collects data on the number of former servicemembers who visit the Veterans Health Admin. for treatment for problem gambling or gambling disorder.

*HOWEVER, they do **NOT** have any data on how many individuals developed gambling problems during the military

2018 study of 260 veterans found that a third of the veterans had gambled and a staggering 6% would be considered problem gamblers

PTSD and Problem Gambling

In a study of military veterans entering treatment for PTSD (Biddle et al., 2005), **17%** met DSM-IV PG criteria. Among 111 veterans entering a gambling treatment program, 64% reported a history of emotional trauma; 40% physical trauma; and 24.3% sexual trauma; most trauma had occurred in childhood.

History of trauma was associated with a greater frequency of suicide attempts and drug and alcohol dependence, more severe scores in measures of psychiatric distress, and limited effects on personality functioning.

Kausch et al. (2006)

Veterans with PTSD have a **60% higher rate** of gambling addiction than the general population

Problem Gambling & Vets

VA does not systematically screen for gambling disorder

In 1972 the Dept. Veterans Affairs opened its first gambling addiction center – now part of the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center

- *Draws more than 100 veterans annually from around the nation

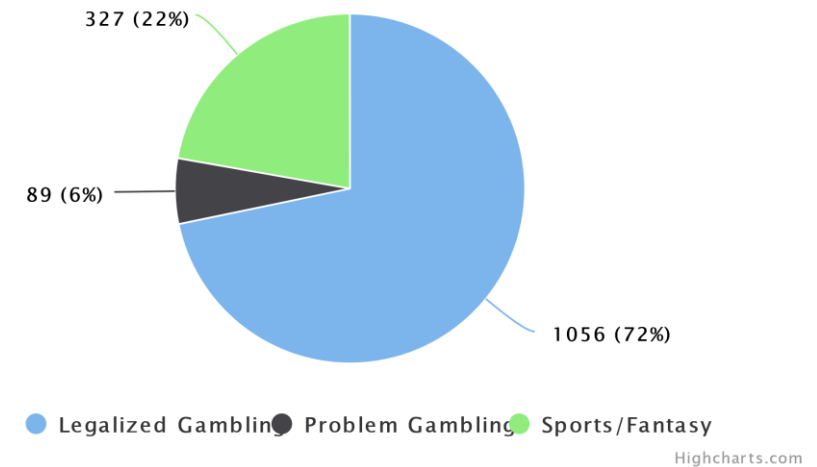
November 2019 – the second ever in-patient gambling addiction center has opened – this time – in Las Vegas

- *Hosts 30- and 45-day programs

- *Has 20 beds – 5 beds in a separate wing just for women

Policy Concerns & Veterans

- Many pieces of filed legislation prompting gambling expansion will negatively impact our military and veterans
 - **Ohio** – advocating to legalize machines in VFW's
 - 2018 study conducted by the Bedford VA, MA
 - Funded by the MA Gaming Commission



On The Horizon

Advocacy and the future



- GAP Act – **Call to Action**
- Inclusion of Gambling Disorder in Health and Human Services mandate
- Safer Sports Betting Initiative (SSBI) and policy recommendations incorporated into all new gambling related legislation and regulations
- Expansion of gambling diversion courts
- Funding for NIH research on gambling disorder

CALL TO ACTION



**Call your political leaders
& encourage them to
support the GAP Act.**

www.ncpgambling.org/gap-act

PROTECT OUR TROOPS BY PREVENTING GAMBLING ADDICTION.



Brianne Doura-Schawohl
Legislative Director
brianned@ncpgambling.org
774-571-9451

Connect





NCPG

National Council on Problem Gambling

Gamble responsibly.



1-800-522-4700



ncpgambling.org/chat

24/7 confidential
helpline for problem
gamblers & their families.



@NCPGambling



@ncpg.org



@ncpg_gambling



National Council on
Problem Gambling



NCPG

National Council on Problem Gambling